

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY/ FALUN GONG PERSECUTION IN CHINA/ NEW CANADIAN POLICY RE BEIJING

Dec 9, 2020

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National webinar organized by Falun Gong Association of Canada
Ottawa

Bilateral relations between Canada and China are currently at rock bottom. A Nanos opinion survey across Canada pre-COVID-19 indicated that nine in ten Canadians held a negative impression of the Government of China.

This is no doubt in part due to the arbitrary arrests of our Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, who remain in inhuman prison conditions coming up on two years, following Canada's arrest of Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou. Jonathan Manthorpe, author of *Claws of the Panda*, correctly notes this week in the *Ottawa Citizen* that the Huawei affair shows that Beijing "cares more about the fate of one Red Princess than it does about the whole relationship with Canada."

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) concluded last year that the Chinese Communist Party is staging a vehement attack on Western democracies and values.

Over the past 20 years, one of the major issues that has shaped Canada-China policy for the worse has been Ottawa's silence on the on-going mass human rights abuses to its people, such as those who practise Falun Gong.

In mid-2006, David Matas and I as volunteers did an independent investigation into the persistent claims of forced organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners in China. We released two reports and a book titled *Bloody Harvest*.

We concluded that for over two decades, Beijing's party-state has directed a vast network of forced vital organ-harvesting from prisoners of conscience--primarily Falun Gong, but also Uyghurs, Tibetans, and Christians who are killed for their organs. They are then sold to recipients in China and foreigners. No regime in history has carried out such barbaric acts.

Specifically, we found beyond any doubt that between the years 2000 and 2005, 41,500 organs were sourced mostly from Falun Gong prisoners of conscience, who were killed during their organ removals.

We released an *Update* on our investigations in 2016. We examined the transplant programs of hundreds of hospitals across China, drawing on medical journals, hospital websites, and deleted websites found in archives.

We concluded cautiously that a minimum of 60,000 transplants per year were being performed across China as of mid-2016, not the approximate 10,000 Beijing claimed.

On June 17, 2019, an independent China tribunal in London – chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice, who led the war crimes prosecution of Slobodan Milosevic at the International Criminal Court - released its final judgement on the allegations of organ transplant abuse in China.

The Tribunal concluded unanimously:

"Forced organ harvesting has been committed for years throughout China on a significant scale and that Falun Gong practitioners have been one – and probably the main – source of organ supply".

It added: "There is no evidence of the practice having been stopped and the tribunal is satisfied that it is continuing."

In an *Ottawa Citizen* opinion piece (<https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/bulka-china-still-harvests-organs-from-prisoners-and-the-world-does-little-to-stop-it>) Canada's respected Rabbi Emeritus Dr. Reuven Bulka later commented on Beijing's organ harvest crimes.

"This is murder, brutal murder: taking organs from the bodies of live people, Even though there was irrefutable evidence this was happening, the Chinese authorities denied it...

"Then, in 2014, the Chinese authorities announced they would soon be stopping this practice of taking organs from executed prisoners. They announced stoppage of a practice they had previously denied. They said, for the entire world to hear: 'The murders of which we are accused, and which we deny ever happened, will soon stop'.

"They thereby revealed that they are liars as well as murderers...

"Based on the recent China Tribunal findings... we learn that the Chinese authorities are at it again, or, more accurately, still at it.

"The facts are clear. Ninety-thousand transplants a year, coupled with a waiting time of just a few weeks and the assurance of a back-up organ should the original organ fail, is a combination that has no equal anywhere.

"That is the reality in China... and can only be explained as resulting from the murders of readily available 'prisoners' – mostly members of the Falun Gong, but including Tibetans, Uighur Muslims and Christian sects...

"A number of countries ban travel to China for transplant surgery. Strangely, Canada and the United States are not among them. They should be.

"No deal with a murderous regime that regularly kills its citizens to make money is worth the paper on which it is written. Any deal with China, on any matter, must include an insistence that this barbaric practice stop immediately, coupled with a mechanism whereby such stoppage is verifiable."

Dr. Bulka says it all. He speaks for Canadian/universal values on this issue just as he does at our national Remembrance Day ceremonies so often on November 11th.

Conclusion

Human Rights Watch recommended last May that governments use Magnitsky laws and other targeted sanctions against Beijing officials implicated in organ pillaging.

Canada now lists a number of officials alleged to be involved in gross human rights violations or corruption from Russia, Venezuela, South Sudan, Myanmar and Saudi Arabia, but strangely no-one from China.

If Canada and other democracies showed more commitment to our values, the vile commerce might end.

It is any wonder why China is now blatantly persecuting democratic residents of Hong Kong by absurd prosecutions and Uyghurs with such intensity? Xi Jinping himself has been quoted saying that Uyghurs should be shown “absolutely no mercy”.

Is it any wonder why China does not hesitate to use trade and business incentives to further silence our government?

Beijing will not hesitate to continue to undermine our Western democracy and values to advance fascist objectives. Instead,

- Canada must take all opportunities to condemn publicly the Beijing regime on its ongoing persecution of Falun Gong;
- Canada should apply our Magnitsky laws and other targeted sanctions against any Chinese government official known to be involved in the persecution of Falun Gong and organ harvesting;
- Canada should, like Australia, adopt a ‘Foreign Interference Law’ to stop Chinese officials from interfering with Canadians anywhere in our country;
- All United Front organizations posing as community groups should be registered as Foreign Agents in Canada; and
- Ottawa must actively call for the release of Canadian citizens, including Ms. Sun Qian, who has been suffering in prison for 3 years as a Falun Gong practitioner.

It’s time to stop currying favor with one of the world’s worst human rights abusers.

Instead, it’s time to stand on our values and block the Beijing party-state from attacking Canadian values with impunity.

It’s time for Canada to stand on the human dignity side of history.
Merci, amis/amies.